

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday, 12 October 2015 at 6.00 pm in the Ante Room at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Paul Hodgson (Chair)	G Hill
	A Forbes	G McLean
	A Gibson	G Roughead
	K Graham	G Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

W Pattison, Town Clerk
6 Members of the Public

OPEN SESSION

Ms Clare Dean thanked BTC re-claiming VAT monies due to the Council. Ms Clare Dean also expressed her concern at the absence of CCTV cameras and thought Police body cameras would not deter crime. Crime rates were again rising in Berwick compared to previous years. A representative from Pubwatch also expressed her concern that a Councillor had made public on social media that CCTV was not working in the Town and as a result of this had left Pub Managers/owners vulnerable and without protection.

The Town Clerk opened the meeting in the absence of a Chair and Vice Chair.

F067/15 1.ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Hill proposed Cllr Hodgson as Chairman and this was seconded by Cllr Graham and agreed by all.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Paul Hodgson be appointed Chairman of the Finance and Resources Committee for the remainder of the 2015-16 municipal year.

F068/15

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillor H Bettison (alternative meeting), D Blackburn (holiday), I Dixon (personal) and C Seymour (holiday).

F069/15

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2015 were proposed by Cllr Hill and seconded by Cllr Gibson and agreed and signed as a correct record by all.

F070/15

4. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllr McLean, item 7 – Christmas Trees as his son in law provides them and Cllr Graham also item 7 as requesting a tree for Prior and Cllr Roughead item 9 - Hoppa Bus.

F071/15

5. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

F072/15

6. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS AND ORDERS

Cllr Hill queried item 210 which was denoted as erection of play equipment and asked if this was in regard to a Council planning application for the equipment at Flagstaff Park. The Clerk advised this was correct.

RESOLVED: To approve the payments and orders appended to these minutes and advise on the £10 payment.

F073/15

7. APPROVAL OF PLANNED EXPENDITURE

The ordering of Christmas Trees came up for discussion with McCreath and Sons and Stichell Forestry both giving quotes. Cllr Mclean advised Mr McCreath had always given attention to detail and had replaced trees last year which he felt were not up to standard. Cllr Hill thought this may be a prejudicial interest and Cllr McLean apologised. It was decided to obtain one more quote and because of time factors the decision would be made on the chosen supplier by email between the Clerk and Councillors.

A decision on Christmas lights was deferred until more information was provided.

Cllr Anne Forbes advised that a Christmas tree at Highfields would be a nice gesture towards the community but would need 4 Housing permission and

Cllr Graham also requested a tree for Prior and this would be sited on resident land.

RESOLVED: To obtain one more quote for Christmas Trees and to decide on the supplier by email due to time factors

F074/15

8. RECEIPTS

Cllr Hill queried payment of £10 from the former Clerk and asked for further information.

F075/15

9. BUDGET

Noted.

Councillor Hill also requested all Councillors were to agree Budget Setting.

F076/15

10. CAMERAS

Northumbria Police has requested the Council consider providing police officers with 8 body cameras at a cost of £499.00 each. Councillors expressed once again their concern at the lack of working CCTV cameras in Berwick and although opinion was that the body cameras were a good thing for the protection of police officers it was also felt they would not help to lower crime in the Town because they would only be useful when officers were making an arrest or at a scene of a crime already committed. The Clerk advised quotes would be obtained from a Blyth Security Company regarding security cameras mounted on lamp posts containing a memory stick so that offenders could be detected once the film was played back. **Suspend Standing Orders** – Mrs Margaret Straughan advised her concern that this would not be immediately picked up by the Police and would not assist in violent situations and thought that the CCTV cameras need to be replaced. The Clerk advised options/costs would also be obtained and that the Council would also need Police co-operation. Cllr Hill thought the Council should also write to the Police Commissioner, Vera Baird and advise her of local concern/feeling. Councillors then agreed to not donate £4,000 for body cameras at this particular time. **Standing Orders resumed**

F077/15

11. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

Mr Stephen Warren, Deputy Comptroller of Jersey Audit Office has been appointed to audit the Council's finances. Mr Warren has already started work

and will return on November 4th, 5th and 6th to finish the audit and will return to the full Council Meeting on November 23rd to read his report out verbally. Cllr Hodgson advised the auditors terms of engagement had been approved by all Councillors. **Suspend Standing Orders** – Cllr Gibson asked Ms Clare Dean why her queries regarding the Council's accounts had had to be confidential. Ms Clare Dean advised it was her right to query tax payer's money and Cllr Graham advised the Council always welcomed the public's views and concerns. **Standing Orders Resumed**

F078/15

12. HUD'S HEAD

The Clerk asked Councillors if they agreed to further work taking place at Hud's Head to lay paving stones and paint seats and generally improve the area which was at the start of the cycle route. Councillors agreed.

Cllr Mclean also asked the Clerk to report large pot holes on the tarmac which was a safety concern for cyclists.

RESOLVED: To tidy up and lay paving stones and to paint 2 seats at Hud's Head and to report pot holes on the tarmac to NCC.

F079/15

13. FINANCIAL DECISIONS MADE BY OTHER COMMITTEES

None

F080/15

14. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

A request from Berwick and District Youth Activity Club for £1541.92 to provide an activity service for young people between 13 and 25 years which also includes the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme was discussed by Councillors Although not against the application, Councillors were not sure where exactly the venue was for the Club and Cllr Roughead wondered if the club had also approached other Parish Councils in the area for both funding and membership. A query on how much was currently left in the Council budget will also be investigated.

RESOLVED: The Clerk will request further information in support of this application and also ascertain how much is left in the budget.

F081/15

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 9 November 2015 at 6.00pm.

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED**

Voucher Code	Date	Cheque	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
211 Promotion	02/10/2015	101179	Signs	AA Media Ltd	336.00	67.20	403.20
212 Promotion	02/10/2015	101179	Signs	AA Media Ltd	270.00	54.00	324.00
213 Professional Services	02/10/2015	101180	Legal services	Collingwood Legal	1,883.00	376.60	2,259.60
214 Professional Services	02/10/2015	101180	Legal services	Collingwood Legal	312.00	62.40	374.40
215 IT Support	02/10/2015	101181	IT support	Northern Lab	90.00	18.00	108.00
216 Dog Fouling (WOOFS)	02/10/2015	101182	Dog bag dispensers	Wybone	236.45	47.30	283.75
217 Photocopies	02/10/2015	101183	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	90.07	18.01	108.08
218 Floral Displays [materials]	02/10/2015	101184	Plants	Newton Don Nursery	487.60	97.52	585.12
219 Other Events Grants	02/10/2015	101185	Grant	Berwick Literary Festival	1,592.96	0.00	1,592.96
222 Community Projects	02/10/2015	101186	Grant	Berwick OAPs	300.00	0.00	300.00

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
210	Legal & Professional Fees	01/10/2015	101166	Planning Fee	Northumberland County Council	192.50	0.00	192.50

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
DIRECT PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
220	Salaries: Pension	02/10/2015	direct debit	Pension	NEST	153.13	0.00	153.13
221	Telecoms	02/10/2015	direct debit	phone	BT	101.18	20.23	121.41

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

Voucher Notes

- 210 Planning fee relating to erection of play equipment in Flagstaff Park
- 211-2 Road signs promoting Autumn Festivals
- 213-4 Charges for legal advice on employment issues
- 215 Monthly IT contract
- 216 New dog bag dispensers
- 217 Monthly charge for office photocopies
- 218 Winter bedding plants
- 219 Part payment of grant awarded to Berwick Literary Festival
- 220 Monthly pension payment
- 221 Quarterly telephone bill [calls and line rental]
- 222 Payment of grant awarded to Berwick OAPs